

TELEPHONE PSYCHOGRAPHICS
ABSTRACT

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Non-traditional mediums of shopping have experienced tremendous growth during the past two years. Consumer values concerning leisure time, energy, and multiple family incomes, as well as increases in crime and other current characteristics, have contributed to this expansion in non-traditional shopping mediums. A subset of these mediums is telephone shopping.

The objective of this study was to enumerate a national psychographic profile concerning toll-free telephone shopping. The need for the study evolved from the limited, localized, and conflicting results of research prior to "Psychographics of Telephone Shopping."

Limitations of the study included (1) the spurious and unproven relationship between consumer attitude and behavioral intent, (2) the restriction to female heads of household as the only respondents, (3) the limited number of hypotheses tested, (4) the assumed error inherent in stochastic models, and (5) the relatively limited existing body of research concerning telephone shopping.

The method implemented was an extension of Martin Fishbein's attitude model, where $A_o = \sum_i B_i a_i$. The belief and evaluative aspect data were compared with the attitude object through a multivariate linear regression analysis, where $Y = A + B_1 X_1 + B_2 X_2 + \dots + B_k X_k$. Further quantitative investigation was accomplished by analysis of variance and correlation coefficient calculations. Additional quantitative explanation was developed through an orthogonal rotation factor analysis.

The sampling frame consisted of all residential Bell Telephone Company subscribers in the continental United States. The sample was stratified by West, North-Central, South, and Northeast regions. Sample data was collected from over 1300 respondents.

The test instrument consisted of a closed-end, telephone questionnaire. Three pilot tests were drawn to validate questions concerning the one dependent and twenty-one independent variables. A Likert, summated, rating scale was used to record attitude responses.

The empirical frequency analysis indicated that the stratified regions were homogeneous in responses to the dependent and independent variables. Only slight variation existed. Favorable agreements existed in the perceptions toward enabling a post-point-of-purchase sale (89 percent), expanded shopping area (85 percent), enabling purchases not justifying a trip to the store (79 percent), and propensity to use telephone shopping in the future (75 percent). Lower responses were recorded in perceptions concerning paying slightly more for a product using the telephone shopping medium (52 percent),

the likelihood of purchasing a product for the first time using the telephone (33 percent), and that telephone shopping provides better access to knowledgeable sales personnel (45 percent). The demographic characteristics of the respondent most likely to use telephone shopping in the future are that she is a non-metropolitan, a female head of household larger than three, between the ages of eighteen and forty-four, and has a higher than average income (but not strongly so).

The inferential analysis presents four key factors, including several independent variable characteristics which explain the propensity of consumers to use telephone shopping in the future. First, the convenience and efficiency resulting from telephone shopping is the major factor which is related to a positive attitude toward using the medium. Second, consumers were responsive toward the increased product awareness and availability associated with telephone shopping. Next, the respondent was encouraged by special announcements from retailers concerning sale and special items. Last, the consumer perceived an inverse relationship between the availability of effective public transportation and the use of toll-free telephone shopping.

TABLE 1

The Relative Importance of Selection Variables
For All High School Samples (N = 488)

Factors	Mean Value (Highest Score=4)	Rank
Offers What I Want to Study	3.73	1
Quality of Faculty	3.63	2
Prestige of the Department in which you intended to Major	3.51	3
Employment Opportunities after Graduation	3.47	4
Variety of Courses	3.43	5
Academic Standards	3.39	6
Tuition Costs	3.30	7
Helpfulness in Finding Career Employment	3.27	8
Financial Aid Plans	3.13	9
Geographic Location	3.07	10
Prestige of the University	2.99	11
Flexible Academic Programs	2.99	11
Campus Appearance	2.96	13
Intellectual Environment	2.94	14
Admission Requirements	2.94	14
Social, Academic Mix	2.93	16
Student Social Life	2.92	17
Ideals of University	2.90	18
University Housing (Facilities, Requirements, etc.)	2.87	19
Type of Students Attending	2.82	20
School Spirit	2.80	21
Tradition of University	2.78	22
Close to Home	2.63	23
Size of University (Number of Students)	2.61	24
Climate of Geographic Area	2.56	25
Intercollegiate Athletic Programs	2.55	26
Reinforcement from Peers	2.33	27
Desire to Leave Home	2.26	28
Friends Attending	2.19	29
Expected by my Family	2.18	30
Fraternalities/Sororities	2.02	31
University Religious Affiliation	1.87	32